

PRESS RELEASE

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Will Bryant, 34, Watertown, Wis., was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 52 months in prison for conspiring to possess cocaine with intent to distribute. Bryant pleaded guilty to this charge on October 2, 2008.

Between July 2008 and June 2008, Bryant and eight other defendants conspired to possess cocaine with intent to distribute in the Watertown area. Bryant's co-defendants are Maximo Pineda-Buenaventura, Efrain Pineda-Buenaventura, Servando Herrera-Vazquez, Perfecto Pineda-Duque, Jesus Duque Pineda, and three others who remain fugitives. Efrain Pineda-Buenaventura, Servando Herrera-Vazquez and Jesus Duque Pineda have pled guilty and are due to be sentenced for their role in the case in January 2009. Perfecto Pineda-Duque is scheduled to plead guilty on December 4, 2008. Maximo Pineda Buenaventura is scheduled for trial on January 26, 2009.

Beginning in February 2008, the United States received authority from Chief United States District Judge Crabb to conduct wiretaps on several of the telephones being used by these individuals to conduct their drug operation. Several hundred calls

were monitored by law enforcement officers in which the defendants conducted drug transactions or made arrangements for the delivery of cocaine in the Western District of Wisconsin.

On June 19, 2008, law enforcement officers executed 11 search warrants in the Western and Eastern Districts of Wisconsin, resulting in the arrest of Bryant and his co-defendants, the seizure of over \$100,000 in United States currency, several automobiles, and multiple kilograms of cocaine. In addition to the arrest of the above-named defendants, police also arrested Arturo Pineda Lopez, Gerardo Pineda-Soria, Juna C. Pineda Pineda, Teodulo Pineda-Buenaventura, Otoniel Mendoza, and Eli Torres-Banos. These individuals were indicted by a federal grand jury in a separate conspiracy and are presently scheduled for trial on March 9, 2009.

The charges against Bryant were the result of an investigation conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigations-Narcotics Bureau, the Dodge County Sheriff's Department, the Jefferson County Drug Task Force, the Fort Atkinson Police Department, the Watertown Police Department, and the Janesville Police Department. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul W. Connell.

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